(b) if so, the details thereof including the names of the countries with whom agreements were made; and

(c) the time by which the above agreements are likely to come into force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

NH Nos. 45 and 7 in Tamil Nadu

1845. SHRI K. PARASURAMAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to develop the two national highways namely NH-45 and NH-7 in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have any proposal to construct bypass road links around Chennai; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) The following proposals are under consideration for the development of NH-45 and NH-7 :

NH-45 : (i) widening to 4 lane including strengthening the existing 2 lane pavement from Km. 67/0 to 122/0 (Pukkathurai-Thindivanam) under B.O.T. (Built, Operate and Transfer) Scheme; (ii) widening to 4 lane including strengthening the existing 2 lane pavement from Km. 122/0 to 324/0 (Thindivanam to Truchy) under World Bank-III.

NH-7 : Strengthening weak 2 lane in Km. 95/0 to 130/0 and 141/0 to 150/0. Land acquisition for Thirumangalam bypass have been proposed under Annual Plan 1997-98.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The work of Chennai Bypass (length 31.30 Km) is to be done in 2 phases for which alignment has already been approved and the acquisition of land is in progress.

Leaae out of Assets of Ports

1846. SHRI AYYANNA PATRUDU : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to lease out existing assets of ports to the private sector;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measure taken to ensure that private sector participation takes place smoothly in an effective manner?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Private Sector Participation guidelines provide for leasing out of existing assets of the ports to the private sector wherever it would attract additional investment and augment existing facilities and wherever it would result in increased traffic throughput, improvement in quality of service and better productivity.

(c) Government has issued clear and transparent guidelines in this regard.

CAG Report on Army Authorities and Ordnance Factories

1847. SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its report No. 8 of 1995 tabled in both Houses of Parliament on May 9, 1995 has inducted the Army authorities, the respective ordnance factories managements and the Ministry for import of defective equipment, ammunition, non-utilisation of the available material, payment towards fraudulent consignment and delay in demanding claims and replacement etc. thereby causing heavy financial loss;

(b) if so, whether the Government have enquired into the matter and taken any action therein; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) A total of 88 audit paras were received in the Comptroller and Auditor General of India's report No. 8 of 1995 on the functioning of the Army, Ordnance Factories and Ministry of Defence. Of this, action taken notes on 51 audit paras have already been rendered to Monitoring Cell of Ministry of Finance for submission to PAC and action on the remaining 37 audit paras is in progress. Individual Action taken notes contain all details of specific administrative action taken wherever warranted and remedial measures adopted in each case.

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Defence have an established system in place for effective and time-bound follow-up and taking remedial action with reference to deficiencies and irregularities brought out in the Audit Reports. Such corrective measures are taken in consultation with Associated Finance and Audit.

[Translation]

Petrol Pumps

1848. SHRIMATI SUBHAWATI DEVI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of petrol pumps in Darbhanga district in Bihar and the number of petrol pumps against whom complaints have been filed;